

West Midlands

Violence Reduction Unit

02 October 2019

Grand Station,
Wolverhampton

Violence is preventable
not inevitable

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CONTACT

There are a number of ways to get in touch with the team behind the Violence Reduction Unit.

You can email us on: VRU@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk

You can call us on **0121 626 5322** and ask for the VRU team

You can contact and follow us Twitter: [@WestMidsVRU](https://twitter.com/WestMidsVRU)

You can contact and follow us on Facebook: [@WestMidsVRU](https://www.facebook.com/WestMidsVRU)

You can also write to us at...

Violence Reduction Unit

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner's office,
Lloyd House,
Colmore Circus Queensway,
Birmingham,
B4 6NQ

Agenda: Violence Reduction Unit

02 October 2019
Grand Station, Wolverhampton

GUEST ARRIVAL

WELCOME

Cllr Ian Brookfield, Leader, City of Wolverhampton Council

INTRODUCTION

Rt Hon Jacqui Smith, Former Home Secretary and Hezron Brown

THE COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE

The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, David Jamieson

THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE

Mark Brindley,
The James Brindley Foundation

OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE VIOLENCE

Assistant Chief Constable Sarah Boycott, West Midlands Police and Dr Sue Ibbotson, Centre Director for Public Health England West Midlands

WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Charlie Taylor, Chair of the Youth Justice Board

BREAK

LEARNING FROM THE SCOTTISH MODEL

Niven Rennie, Director of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit

INTERVENING IN VIOLENCE

St Giles Trust, A&E intervention programme

PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

Professor Simon Pemberton - Department of Social Policy, Sociology and Criminology at the University of Birmingham

SOLID FOUNDATIONS

Rev Dr Carver Anderson, Author of the West Midlands Gangs and Violence Commission report

SPOKEN WORD

Sibongile Mkoba, Artist

CONCLUSION

David Jamieson, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner and Ashley Bertie, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner

BINDING COMMITMENT

Signing of the declaration

LUNCH

The afternoon session consists of an expert panel Q&A, table top discussions and lessons from elsewhere. The media won't be present for this part.

Violence Reduction Unit: Making a difference

The West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit has a budget of **£4.034** million for this financial year. This includes **£3.37** million from the Home Office, a **£524,000** grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner and a **£140,000** contribution from local authorities and West Midlands Police.

The funding must be spent on activity that will prevent and reduce violence, vulnerability and exploitation in our area. As well as funding new projects the additional money will allow us to roll out and expand current schemes already in place. We group violence prevention into three categories. Primary prevention prevents violence happening before it starts. Secondary prevention identifies risk factors early and stops violence in its tracks and Tertiary prevention helps victims and perpetrators avoid further involvement in violence. This will be underpinned by intelligence and data sharing between agencies. Below are just some of the initiatives being funded between now and April 2020.

Primary Prevention

- Mentors in Violence Prevention - Mentoring programme in schools whereby children mentor other children to prevent violence.
- School Engagement Officers - These officers will help schools tackle violence by linking them up to appropriate support for those identified as at-risk. This support consists of sport, integrated-mentoring and character building education.
- Specialist mentoring - Targeted mentoring for young people (aged 10 - 18) at risk of violence and living in high crime areas.

Secondary Prevention

- IRIS - Helps GP practices identify patients affected by domestic abuse and provides the victims with support.
- Behavioural Change Campaign - Using behavioural science to change behaviour and reduce violence.

Tertiary Prevention

- A&E Interventions - Intervening in the lives of young people who present at A&E units for treatment after incurring an injury through violence. Mentoring and support are offered to help the young person escape the cycle of violence.
- Intensive support for people leaving gangs - This programme will provide a package of intensive support for both young people and adult gang members resettling from custody or those recently released.



Rev Dr. Carver Anderson,
Author of the West Midlands Gangs and
Violence Commission report

I believe we are at a crucial and defining period in the West Midlands, as we come together for the launch of the region's first Violence Reduction Unit.

The VRU seeks to build on the pioneering work of the Gangs and Violence Commission and the report that emerged in 2017. I remember standing with confidence and optimism on the 7th of December 2017 at the launch of the Commission on 'Gangs and Violence: Uniting to Improve Safety' report. As I stated then and will state again: No single individual, group, agency, perspective, methodology or approach has the competencies to effectively address the challenges and critical issues associated with serious violence in communities or local neighbourhoods. The pained stories in the report, of both victims and perpetrators, impacted by violence, serve as reminders, that these individuals and families are from local communities and therefore are crucial in our exploration regarding: causes, influences and possible solutions associated with violence.

Importantly, the report was clear about the need for sustainable interagency/multiagency partnerships, that would actively champion and implement the recommendations, rooted in public health, community-led and community-involved partnerships, towards developing effective responses to violence in Birmingham in the first instance and the wider West Midlands.

Having spent many hours in meetings with colleagues from the community, statutory, voluntary, business and faith sectors in

exploring the various issues associated with finding solutions for the above concerns, I have seen much willingness from them to be a part of activities, plans and strategies, in the fight against violence whether, spontaneous, intentional or organised. The sad premature loss of lives through violence in some communities, have left families in absolute emotional pain, trauma and fear, with some individuals enraged and wanting to seek revenge for the friend or family member that has been killed. At the centre of supporting families that may have lost a loved one, are community groups or individuals with awareness and cultural competence to help. It is therefore vital to reiterate the crucial need to have community groups and organisations as integral partners in any attempt to address violence in local neighbourhoods.

In considering the above, I remain optimistic that the establishment of the region's VRU offers us the opportunity to ensure that community-involved and community-led approaches are not tangential, as partnerships are strengthened in line with championing of our public health response to violence in the West Midlands. Having said that, I am under no illusion about the possible challenges on the journey ahead as we seek to develop, long term and sustainable interventions towards violence reduction.

Rev. Dr Carver L Anderson



Too often we see families and communities being ripped apart by violence.

David Jamieson -
West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

Violence is preventable, not inevitable and we all deserve to live a life without fear.

Whether it is the hidden tragedies of child abuse, domestic abuse, sexual violence or the more visible, brutal and senseless loss of life caused by knife or gun crime, it must stop.

We know violence is a symptom of deeper problems within our communities. But we also know it can be treated and prevented.

The VRU is a powerful coalition of schools, councils, the health service, police and many more to ensure our communities become safer, stronger and less violent.

We will support our communities. We must protect our young people by making sure they have the skills they need to lead happy, healthy and successful lives that they all so very much deserve. We must create opportunity where it is lacking and we must nurture and enable talent so it can thrive.

This will take time and long-term commitment. It will take dedication. But this challenge, for people in the West Midlands, is nothing more than we are capable of and nothing more than we have achieved in the past.

We must ensure our streets, our homes, our workplaces, our schools, our colleges and

our public spaces are safe. Schools, councils, hospitals, GPs, the police and many, many more must all work together to ensure our communities become safer, stronger and less fearful.

Having a visible police presence on the street is also a key part of reducing violence.

When violence is occurring, sensibly, most of us retreat; police officers move towards the danger.

The good news is we are not starting from scratch. Our Violence Reduction Unit builds on the work we've already started through the Violence Prevention Alliance, the Gangs and Violence Commission and the Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People programme.

Today I am pleased to launch this step change in how we, as partners across the region, will prevent and reduce violence in our communities. From working with patients in A&E units who are being treated for injuries caused by violence, to supporting pupils and their families in deprived areas who need extra support to realise their full potential, we will stop violence before it starts.

Only by working together can we reduce violent crime.



Clive Heaphy
Interim Chief Executive,
Birmingham City Council



Vanessa Jardine
Assistant Chief Constable,
West Midlands Police



Sarah Boycott
Assistant Chief Constable,
West Midlands Police



Dr Sue Ibbotson
Centre Director, Public Health
England West Midlands



Dr Henry Kippin
Director of Public Service Reform,
West Midlands Combined Authority



Jonathan Jardine
Chief Executive, for the Office of
Police and Crime Commissioner



Phil Johns
Deputy Chief Executive,
Birmingham and Solihull Clinical
Commissioning Group

Message from the Violence Reduction Unit's Executive Team

The Violence Reduction Unit is led by executives from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Public Health England, Birmingham City Council (representing all local authorities in the West Midlands), West Midlands Police, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

All partners share the vision that each and every one of our communities should lead safe and fulfilling lives. To achieve this we will pull together, combining our expertise and working alongside communities in our region, to ensure we prevent and reduce violence, vulnerability and exploitation.

But what do we mean by violence? The VRU will adopt the World Health Organisation's definition:

"the intentional use of physical force or power,

threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation"

The VRU has funding of £4.034 million for this financial year. It must be spent by April 2020. We will ensure the funding is channelled straight to the front line, where it is needed most. However we will also conduct careful assessments before money is allocated to ensure it has the biggest impact and targets those most in need.

This means any upscaling of existing initiatives or the creation of new programmes will be commissioned only after evidence has been generated and analysed. This will enable us to develop a longer term, sustainable plan that can prevent violence before it starts and reduce vulnerability and exploitation.

Success will only be achieved if the following takes place:

- 1. Strong foundations** – local and regional partnerships focussed on prevention, working with and for the groups and communities with the most to gain. Using the best collective intelligence, through data sharing, we can understand the problems, assess how to tackle them, and identify what each sector can do to help.
- 2. Stopping violence before it starts**, by tackling the 'causes of the causes' of violence for individuals, groups and communities (primary prevention).
- 3. Stopping the progression of violence**, by detecting the warning signs early and dealing with the risk factors (secondary prevention).
- 4. Support victims and stop things getting worse**, repairing harm and
- rehabilitating individuals (tertiary prevention).
- 5. Preventing further violence** – specifically for those in the criminal justice system.
- 6. Changing attitudes and social norms** – Using communication channels and behavioural science to adapt attitudes and reduce violence.

To achieve our ambitions we will put in place a small and versatile team which is currently led by the VRU's Head of Implementation Claire Dhami. The VRU will need to be forensic, precise, versatile and tenacious. Like a disease, violence doesn't stand still. It adapts, mutates and evolves over time and between localities. That is why the challenge we face needs us to act as one. Only together, using a public health approach, can we create a safer future for us all.